THE COUNCIL FOR TOBACCO RESEARCH—U.S.A., INC.
800 SECOND AVENUE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10017

LITERATURE RETRIEVAL DIVISION
7TH FLOOR

April 24, 1980

Dr. Frank G. Colby
Associate Director of
Scientific Issues
Research Department
R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company
Winston-Salem, N.C.   27102

Dear Frank:

    We have carefully evaluated your March 20, 1980 letter regarding
your analysis of our processing of high priority documents. The overall
thrust of your study appears to focus on two major areas: 1) the lag time
between the identification of a high priority document and its updating
into the Preliminary (In Process) Data Base, and 2) the splitting of certain
documents into shorter components.

    Your study obviously was very time consuming, as was our analysis
of your observations. I am at a loss to understand why you have expended
this effort to deal with two areas that already have been studied extensively
and are well documented.

    First, there are major "backlogs" of documents at many of our pro-
cessing stations. These backlogs sometimes cause delays in the processing
of high priority documents, even though we make every effort to expedite
them. The reasons for the existence of these backlogs, and our recommen-
dations for improving document flow and retrieval, were presented in great
detail in my 25 page memorandum titled "Status of the Literature Retrieval
Division" (December 1979), which I understood you had read. Any additional
study apparently aimed at demonstrating the existence of processing delays
seems inappropriate at this time. Further, I believe that your estimate
of a 9 to 10 week delay in entering documents into the Preliminary Data Base,
if accurate, demonstrates that we have been at least moderately successful
in dealing with a very difficult situation. In fact, we have been able to
maintain a relatively short lag time, despite the large number of documents
in the "backlog" and "in-stream" and despite the fact that our existing
batch systems and manual procedures are stretched to their limits.

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Second, with regard to the splitting of documents into shorter components, you have raised this issue a number of times in the past, and I understood that the matter had been put to rest. We are forced to split documents into shorter components whenever the computer document storage capacity is exceeded. This occurs in a very small percentage of cases and requires tedious and time-consuming special handling. That it occurs at all is related largely to our expanded indexing standards (average of 60 to 70 descriptors per document), which you always have recommended.

Our detailed analysis of your observations regarding lag time and document splitting is attached. I believe that studies dealing with these issues do not yield any benefit at this time. Further, they are time consuming and costly.

Sincerely,

Frederick B. Giller

cc: Francis K. Decker
      Edwin J. Jacob
      Andrew Komendantov

bcc: G.S. DeGregori
      S.L. Kreseski
      O. McShane
      R. Piscitelli